



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/626,954	07/27/2000	Frederick W. Ryan JR.	F-173	9430

919 7590 06/04/2003

PITNEY BOWES INC.
35 WATERVIEW DRIVE
P.O. BOX 3000
MSC 26-22
SHELTON, CT 06484-8000

EXAMINER

WOO, RICHARD SUKYOON

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3629

DATE MAILED: 06/04/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/626,954

Applicant(s)

RYAN, FREDERICK W.

Examiner

Richard Woo

Art Unit

3629

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 March 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 and 28-44 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-26 and 28-44 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 12. 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

- 1) Applicant's arguments, filed March 17, 2003, with respect to WO 01/69914 have been fully considered and are persuasive. The previous rejections have been withdrawn.
- 2) The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

- 3) Claims 1-3, 4, 9, 15-16, 19-20, 22, 28, 30, 34, 39, and 42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stier et al. (US 6,428,219) in view of Fredman (US 6,526,393).

Stier et al. discloses a method of operating a data center (128) for generating postage indicium information for use with printing a postage indicium on a business reply mail piece (col. 6, lines 26-67; for the mail campaign sender), the method comprising the steps of:

receiving postage indicium information at the postage metering system from the data center (128);

printing the postage indicium on the business reply mail piece at the postage metering system (122, 124) using the postage indicium information; and

printing the delivery address on the business reply mail piece at the postage metering system (see Figs. 5-9).

However, Stier et al. does not specifically disclose the method comprising:
generating a registration ID number corresponding to the delivery address;
wherein the delivery address has been selected, by the data center from a
plurality of delivery addresses previously defined by the mail campaign sender;
wherein the registration ID number is used by the user to print a postal indicium
on the business reply mail piece including data relating to the delivery address;
receiving a subsidy provided by the data center to the user of the postage
metering system for mailing the business reply mail piece; and
providing a notification to the mail campaign sender when the business reply mail
piece is posted by the user.

Freedman teaches, for method of mailing or shipping goods using a registration
ID number, that the method comprises:
generating a registration ID number corresponding to the delivery address of the
customer (see Figs.);
wherein the delivery address has been selected, by the data center;
wherein the registration ID number is used by the shipper to print a postal
indiciu on the goods including data relating to the delivery address (see Figs.);
receiving a subsidy provided by the data center to the shipper or user of the
postage metering system for mailing the goods; and

providing a notification to the merchant when the mails or goods are posted by the user (when the barcode or ID numbers of the mails or goods are processed and read by reader, the merchant must receive the notification whether the mailpieces or goods are posted).

Since Fredman and Stier et al. are both from the same field of endeavor, the purpose disclosed by Fredman would have been well recognized in the pertinent art of Stier et al.

Accordingly, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art, to modify the method of operating a postage metering system such that the registration ID number corresponding to the delivery address is previously defined by the mail campaign sender, the user of the postage metering system prints the postage indicium (related to the delivery address) on the business reply mail piece, and the user receives a subsidy provided by the data center for mailing the business reply mail piece, as taught by Fredman, for the purpose of improving customer response time, company cash flow and the general likelihood of a recipient's response.

Stier et al., as modified by Fredman, further discloses a memory device accessible by a computer system, which enables the method Claims as recited above.

4) Claims 8, 14, 17-18, 21, 23-26, 33, 35-38, 41, and 43-44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stier et al. and Fredman as applied to claims 1, 3, 4, 9, 15, 16, and 22 above, and further in view of Allott, III (US 6,121,565).

The modified Stier et al. discloses the method and device as recited above, but does not expressly disclose the invention further comprising:

receiving the subsidy when the business reply mail piece is posted within a specified time period defined by the mail campaign sender; and

providing a warning to for attempting to reply after the expiration date.

Allott, III teaches, for a method of delivery a business reply mail piece using expiring indicia, that the method comprises:

providing a subsidy for mailing the business reply mail piece when the business reply mail piece is posted within a specified time period (see Figs. and summary of the invention);

receiving an expiration date from the mail campaign sender; and

providing a warning to for attempting to reply after the expiration date.

Since Allott and the modified system and method of Stier et al. are both from the same field of endeavor, the purpose disclosed by Allott would have been well recognized in the pertinent art of the modified Stier et al..

Accordingly, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art, to utilize the delivery system using expiring indicia with a manifested time in the modified mail delivery system of Stier et al., as taught by Allott, for the purpose of providing extremely effective method of decreasing the time

Art Unit: 3629

between billing and remittance by positively reinforcing early return of business reply mail piece.

5) Claims 5-6, 10-12, 29, 31 and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stier et al. and Fredman as applied to claims 4 and 9 above, and further in view of Kramer (US 6,282,524).

The modified method of Stier et al. discloses the invention as recited earlier, but does not specifically disclose the invention comprising the limitations of claims of 5-6, 10-12, 29, 31 and 40.

Kramer teaches, for the method of operating a postage metering system for printing a postage indicium, that the method includes the step of performing address hygiene on the delivery address and transmitting a hygiene address to the sender.

Since Kramer and the modified Stier et al. are both from the same field of endeavor, the purpose disclosed by Kramer would have been well recognized in the pertinent art of Stier et al..

Accordingly, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art, to perform address hygiene on the delivery address of the modified Stier et al., as taught by Kramer, for the purpose of ensuring more accurate delivery and qualifying the postage for automation discounts offered by the postal service and making available to the indicia's linking control methods.

Art Unit: 3629

6) Claims 7, 13, and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stier et al., Fredman and Kramer, as applied to claims 6 and 12 above, and further in view of Allott.

The modified Stier et al. discloses the method as recited above, but does not expressly disclose the invention further comprising:

receiving the subsidy when the business reply mail piece is posted within a specified time period defined by the mail campaign sender; and
providing a warning to for attempting to reply after the expiration date.

Allott, III teaches, for a method of delivery a business reply mail piece using expiring indicia, that the method comprises:

providing a subsidy for mailing the business reply mail piece when the business reply mail piece is posted within a specified time period (see Figs. and summary of the invention);

receiving an expiration date from the mail campaign sender; and
providing a warning to for attempting to reply after the expiration date.

Since Allott and the modified system and method of Stier et al. are both from the same field of endeavor, the purpose disclosed by Allott would have been well recognized in the pertinent art of the modified Stier et al..

Accordingly, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art, to utilize the delivery system using expiring indicia

Art Unit: 3629

with a manifested time in the modified mail delivery system of Stier et al., as taught by Allott, for the purpose of providing extremely effective method of decreasing the time between billing and remittance by positively reinforcing early return of business reply mail piece.

Conclusion

7) The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

US 5,822,735 is cited to show a merchandising system for generating and redeeming product discount prints coupons for a selected consumer from a group of consumers. Both the consumer and coupon identifications are encoded on the coupon in machine readable form whereby the machine-readable code may be read at a POS terminal using a code reading apparatus.

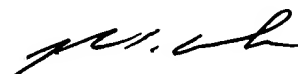
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Richard Woo whose telephone number is 703-308-7830. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8:30 AM -5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Weiss can be reached on 703-308-2702. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-7687 for regular communications and 703-308-3691 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0861.



Richard Woo
Patent Examiner
GAU 3629
May 29, 2003



JOHN G. WEISS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600